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ABSTRACT

This guide focuses on the major tasks involved in organizing, planning, and implementing a permanent planning program for foster care. Phase I is concerned with how to organize administrative support for the program so that program planning and implementation can proceed. It also discusses how to overcome some possible hurdles in working to gain such support from superiors or subordinates on an agency staff. Phase II discusses issues which are essential for making decisions about the program's design. These include (1) who to involve in program planning, (2) how to organize information, and (3) how to establish goals and objectives. Phase III is concerned with those administrative activities that help to stabilize the demonstration program or the management tasks that must be accomplished by the program manager so that staff can deliver services. (MP)

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Permanent Planning in Foster Care

A Guide for Program Planners

Linda Dreyer

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Linda Dreyer
Project Director

INTRODUCTION

This Guide was designed to introduce the reader to the major tasks in organizing, planning, and implementing a permanent planning program for foster care. Content has been developed around three phases in program planning: organizing political support for the program, general program planning activities, and program implementation. Since permanent planning has usually been implemented as a demonstration program preliminary to a state-wide or agency-wide effort, the unique aspects of planning and managing demonstration programs are highlighted.

Although the major audience for the Guide might be those agency-based professionals assigned to implement a permanent planning program, it is also useful for social work students who are likely to become direct service supervisors or middle-managers in public agencies early in their career.

Throughout the text, quotes from the collective experiences of current permanent planning specialists have been used to illustrate concepts further. We have also provided worksheets in Appendix A to aid the readers in applying concepts to their own situation. An annotated bibliography can be found in Appendix C for those readers who want more information on some of the major topics covered in the Guide. The publications, listed by number in the References, are referred to in the text by that number enclosed in parentheses.

For a brief perspective on the elements of permanent planning, see Appendix D.

PHASE I: ORGANIZING POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR THE PROGRAM

For permanent planning to succeed as a program, all of its elements must be coordinated by administrative support at both the state and county levels. The Organizing Phase is concerned with creating that administrative support so that actual program planning and implementation can proceed. It is not a discrete phase -- many program planning activities can and do overlap, especially collecting and analyzing need assessment data.

The planner's goal is to finally have enough support and structure in place so that the program can be implemented. Figure 1 shows the three phases of program planning. Note that they are affected by the nature of the proposal, or the idea for the program; the change agent, or person who will facilitate the planning process; and the organization or agency in which the program will be implemented.

These three factors determine whether or not the program will be implemented and what form it will take. Their impact is especially apparent during the Organizing Phase when the objective is to convince key decision-makers of the need for a program. We will discuss ways of assessing their impact on your organization in the following sections.

Laying the Groundwork

The Organizing Phase begins when an issue gets redefined as a problem by the change agent and other individuals and groups who perceive the issue the same way.

> "I sat through a speech on foster care 'drift' and a child's need for a permanent home, and it struck me that our agency was probably perpetuating 'drift' with our sloppy case management practices. It was something I really wanted to follow-up on when I got home from the conference."

If other staff members can be convinced that foster care 'drift' is a cause for concern and that poor case management contributes to it, the group then has something to organize around. They can continue to add to their list of problems that cause 'drift,' or decide that case management practice is the only thing that needs to be changed. Either way, they must arrive at a point where the issue can be restated as a problem for which a proposal for change (program) can be developed. Otherwise, they will lose interest in the issue and turn their attention elsewhere.

The Change Agent

Although several staff might be responsible for moving a proposal for change through the planning process, usually one person assumes leadershi; --

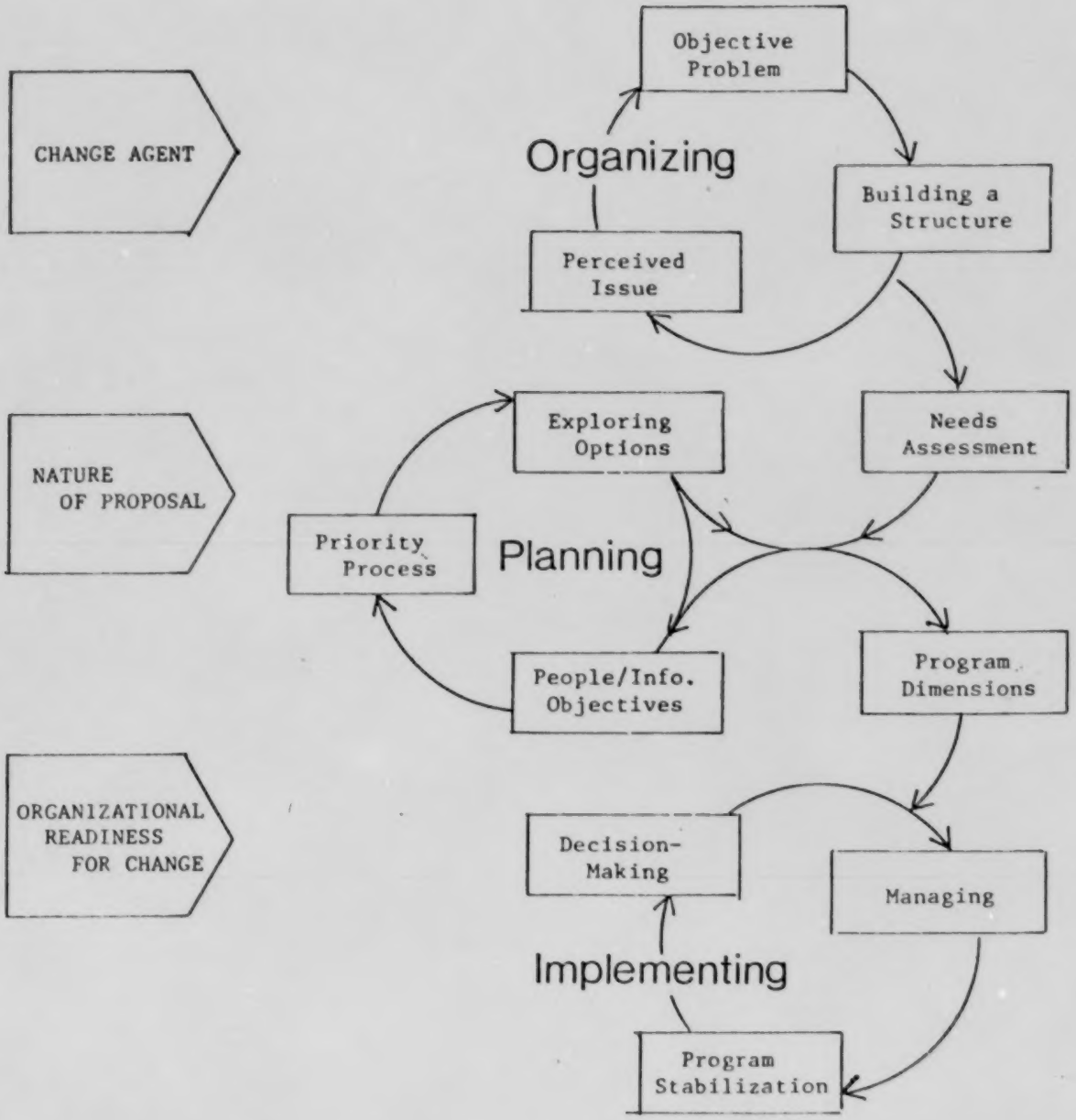

Figure 1: TYPICAL ACTIVITY PHASES IN ORGANIZING, PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING A PROGRAM

a role we are labeling as "change agent." Most of the people who have been permanent planning change agents have been in middle management positions within state or local foster care agencies. They had been assigned the authority to design and implement a permanent planning program by a superior, but their actual control over events and potential power depended on a complex mix of organizational variables, personal experience, knowledge, and credibility. (6) Your situation may be very similar.

From now on, we will assume that you have put yourself in the role of a middle management change agent. We will discuss some of the unique hurdles to overcome as you work to gain support from your superiors and the staff below you, who will do the actual work of permanent planning.

Organizational Distance. One of those hurdles has to do with organizational distance, or the number of administrative levels through which you will have to take your change proposal to the ultimate decision-makers in the organization. This distance can be illustrated with an organizational chart.

Figure 2 is an organizational chart of a state-administered, county-administered child welfare agency. In the figure, we have identified the levels a proposal for permanent planning had to go through before a program could be implemented.

Experts in the area of planning have suggested that the more levels a proposal must pass through, the more likely that resistance* to implementing it will increase by the time it reaches the final level. (12) Each time a subordinate communicates about the proposal to a superior, the content gets filtered through the intermediary's perceptual scheme regarding the proposal itself and you, the change agent. This can result in:

- information loss - the person leaves out information that doesn't seem important
- distortion - the person uses his own experience to make a judgment about the proposal and its supporters
- delay - or the incredible length of time it can take to move an idea through the organization.

*Since we'll be discussing resistance several times in this material, we should clarify our use of the term: Not all resistance to a proposal is unfounded and not everyone who resists a proposal is an adversary who must be manipulated into a compromised support of the proposal. It is ultimately more productive to approach resistance as a normal reaction to a change in the status-quo - an attitudinal barrier that can be overcome through education, information, and collaboration.

"My immediate superior was fairly supportive of my proposal for starting case screening and case review, and agreed to present it to the Bureau Chief. However, she first cut it down in length and changed a lot of the wording I had used so as not to 'offend' him. I thought her version really watered down the argument, but I had to trust her judgment at that point. She knew more about what he was like than I did."

Organizational distance creates other problems, too. It is very likely that you have a much different perspective on the organization and what needs to happen in it than your superiors. But many organizations don't give much opportunity to talk about these differences, much less your ideas for change. Obviously, persuading others that you have a good idea is much easier when you see them daily and can talk with them about it informally.

Finally, your proposal for change is probably going to compete with those from staff in other units. In any organization, there is continual decision-making about who will do what and who will get what, which means you have to be very political in your role as a change agent. The problem is that you might be too removed by organizational distance to know with whom you're competing and for what.

Of course, every organization has an informal organizational chart which represents the complex interrelationships that staff have established by virtue of longevity, professional expertise, or political behavior. Much of the decision-making in the organization happens through these informal channels, so it is to your advantage to know as much about it as you can.

Or, from another perspective: If your position on the formal chart doesn't give you enough clout to get things done, then what other resources can you deploy? Middle management staff generally have the following sources of power: (2)

- expertise
- access to information and control of communication
- informal leadership, or access to it.

For example, you may want to label yourself as the organization's resident expert in permanent planning. (Be sure you deserve the label!) Your superiors may then perceive you as knowing what decisions need to be made and what information will be needed to make them, and allow you more lee-way throughout the organization than before.

Your own skills as an informal leader, or access to those who are identified as informal leaders, are a very important commodity when you are ready to

approach potential supporters for the program. Informal leadership really refers to your ability to win friends and influence enemies among both your peers and your superiors in the organization. This aspect of politicking for a proposal may seem incompatible with professionalism but it is essentially true that middle management change agents can not implement a proposal without solid support in various places.

WORKSHEET I - FORMAL AND INFORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

This worksheet will help you:

- identify the number and range of formal administrative levels through which your proposal for change must move
- identify informal leaders within the organization and your access to them.

Building a Structure

A major task during Phase I will be to develop a coalition of people who can demonstrate support for the proposal to key decision-makers as it moves through the Organizing and Program Planning phases into Implementation. Not every proposal needs to have a formal coalition or task force (as we prefer to call it) created for this purpose; informal or ad hoc coalitions can work just as well. What is important is that the coalition can provide political support, assist in decision-making about program design issues, and lend credibility to a state-wide or agency-wide implementation.

So, although this may well be a short-term coalition, it must be an effective one while it lasts. Whether you chair the group yourself or help staff it, its care and feeding will require lots of attention. Above all else you want to avoid the BOPSAAT* phenomenon and strive for a task force with a well-defined sense of purpose and required action. To achieve that, you must first consider the task force's:

- activities
- sanction or charge
- composition
- size

*Bunch of people sitting around a table

Activities. A decision that you must make prior to establishing the task force is whether or not you want a group that will actually perform work or simply review and approve what you do. The latter is more expedient and is not necessarily a misuse of members' time. However, if you choose the former, you must take responsibility to provide structure and momentum until the task force has had enough time and experience working as a group to provide its own motivation.

A working task force is often involved in strategies for convincing key decision-makers that the proposal for change has merit. (13) Some of these strategies include:

- providing information about the nature of the problem
- presenting alternative courses of action
- requesting support for new forms of service delivery, i.e., permanent planning.

Individual members of the task force might use their access to formal or informal leaders to politick on behalf of the proposal. During these interactions, they might:

- make appeals to conscience, professional ethics, and values;
- persuade by logical argument, or selective presentation of data;
- point out the negative consequences of continuing a specific policy.

"My favorite 'strategy story' happened while we were trying to rewrite the state's statute for terminating parental rights. The legislative committee that would review the bill was chaired by a senator who was adamantly opposed to a new statute. All of our rational attempts to persuade him had failed. Well, we had a sort of 'Lady Plushbottom' on the task force from the community who knew him socially. She was on the task force for cosmetic reasons, really, but one day she invited him to have lunch with her and 'some friends.' With the help of a case aide, she rounded up about ten foster kids and took them to this really fancy restaurant. When the senator walked in, she said, 'Tom, these are a few of the children I've been telling you about.' He was converted by the end of the lunch."

Sanction. Many potential members will decide whether or not to participate based on the range of their authority or ability to influence decision-makers with task force recommendations. The task force's authority is an issue that is best resolved between you and your superior prior to soliciting members.

Secondly, if you want members from your level or above in the organization, or from outside of it, the invitation to serve on the task force should come from your superior, to reflect her support for the group. Sometimes this requires convincing a superior about the merits of having a task force.

> "When the Bureau Chief finally got around to agreeing to let me move on a needs assessment and a report, I said the problem was I might not be objective enough about what I found -- I needed input from a wider range of people and would like to have a task force working with me. She asked who I was considering, and I gave her my wish list, asking if she had any suggestions. We went through the names on the list and my rationale for them being there, some of which she pooh-poohed. But by the last name, she was beginning to like the idea of the task force. I asked if I could draft an invitational letter to the remaining people on the list for her review and signature. She said I could, and I made sure I did it the same day before she lost her enthusiasm."

Composition. Who should belong and why? Generally, members are solicited because of their ability to influence decision-makers, their access to information, or their role in carrying out program objectives and activities.

Some members will be obvious choices: adoption specialists, representatives from the legal community, potential program staff. Others may be nonprofessional champions for social action from the community at large. Not all of these people are likely to be equally hard-working or committed, so balance the task force with members known to be productive and keep the membership list open in case you want to redistribute composition.

Size. What will be the right size for the task force? That depends on whether you want the whole group to be involved in all activities or expect to use committees for pieces of the work ahead. Consider the logistics of getting a large number of people together against the fact that few meetings have 100 percent attendance. Consider the amount of time that you have to plan the program against the time it takes a group to come to understand the task, their purpose, and each other.

WORKSHEET II - BUILDING A STRUCTURE

This worksheet will help you:

- move through the steps of task force composition
- plan for task force responsibilities.

Nature of the Proposal

As you move through the process of identifying more pieces to the problem of foster care drift and possible solutions to it, you'll eventually come to the point where you have a proposal for change on paper for other staff to react to. By this time, you may have a lot of your self invested in what that proposal says and is intended to change, which is an excellent reason for trying to look at it from other points of view.

You can probably think of a lot of reasons why a permanent planning proposal should generate support, e.g., philosophical (all children have a right to a permanent home), and fiscal (the cost of long-term foster care is too high). But keep in mind that few proposals are implemented solely on their ethical or fiscal merits. Consciously or not, most top administrators also judge a proposal on the answers to "How much will it affect us, or disturb the status quo?" and "What's in it for me?"

Secondly, although permanent planning is not a radically new idea, it does alter the way services are provided in many agencies. For that reason, it should be defined and treated as an innovation (11), which brings us to the second major point: Organizations are less resistant to proposals that can be implemented as demonstration programs. Fewer resources need to be committed to an unproven venture and the program's impact on the total organization can be more carefully assessed.

You should consider how the changes you are proposing to make are going to affect various levels in the existing foster care program: What is the size of the unit affected and how deep or extensive is the change? As the number of units and depth of change increase, so does resistance to the proposed change. (12) Figure 3 shows what we mean.

> "We put out a memo to line staff saying that we were going to initiate periodic case screening in the next three months, and all hell broke loose. What we thought was a procedural change looked much different to them. Many of them thought we were changing the way we did business. Others thought we had found a new way to check up on them or were mad because we hadn't asked for their input on how case screening would add to their work load."

Another critical assessment of your proposal should be from the perspective of other programs in the organization. More than likely, some of the proposed changes are going to have an impact on their established procedures or allocation of manpower and other resources. These potential side effects can cause tremendous resistance to your proposal. Better to know where and why first so that you can plan a strategy for dealing with it.

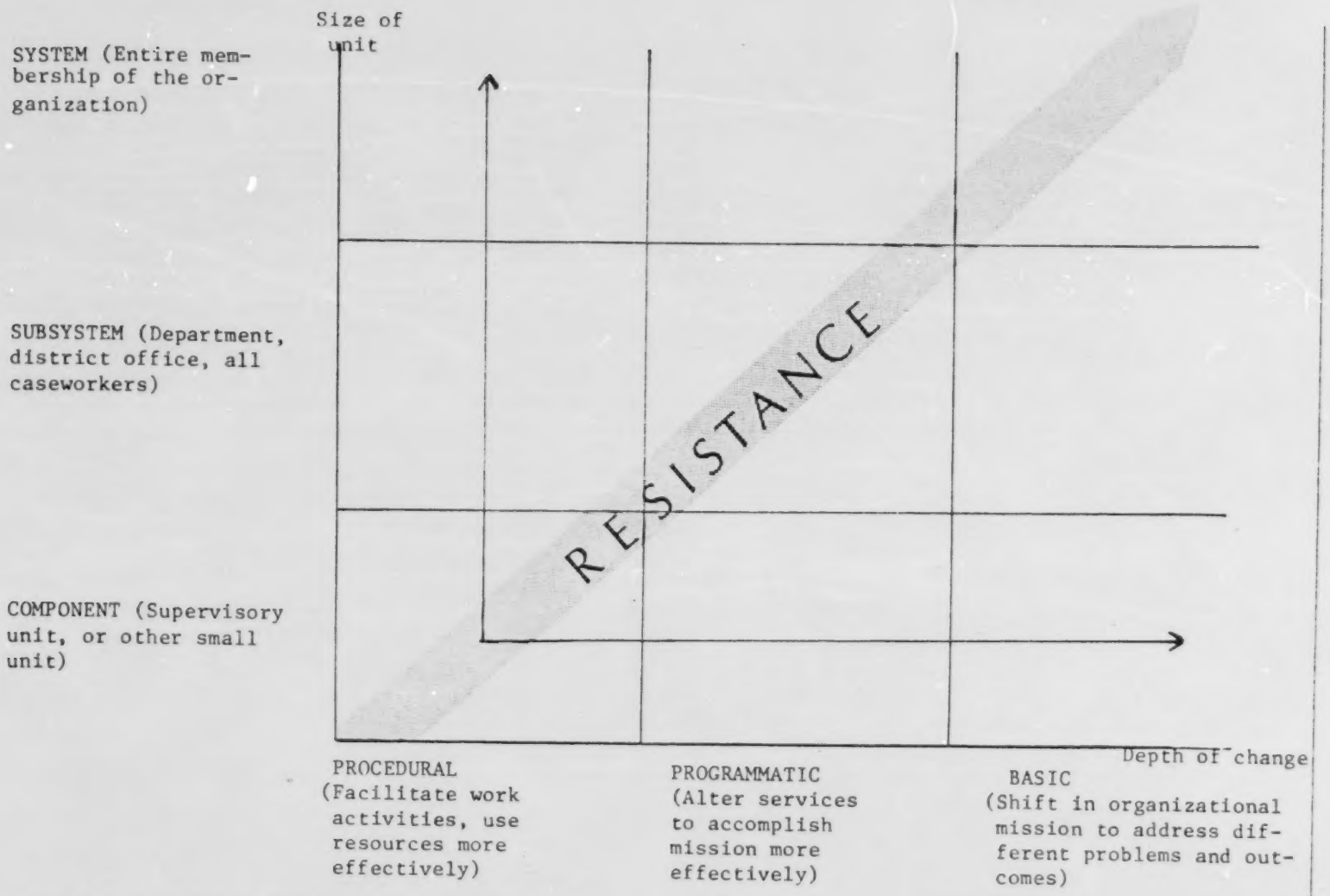
Size of unit
SYSTEM (Entire membership of the organization)
SUBSYSTEM (Department, district office, all caseworkers)
COMPONENT (Supervisory unit, or other small unit)
RESISTANCE
Depth of change
PROCEDURAL (Facilitate work activities, use resources more effectively)
PROGRAMMATIC (Alter services to accomplish mission more effectively)
BASIC (Shift in organizational mission to address different problems and outcomes)

Figure 3: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE GENERALITY AND DEPTH OF A CHANGE PROPOSAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL RESISTANCE. Based on Patti's discussion of the concept (12).

"The head of the adoption unit had always taken the stand that kids over six were too hard to place. We suspected that case screening would uncover lots of kids over six who would be good candidates for permanent planning. So, the head of the adoption unit was the first person we asked to be a member of the task force. We hoped we could gradually educate her to see things our way."

WORKSHEET III - DEALING WITH STAFF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

This worksheet will help you:

- identify some potential sources of resistance to changes you are proposing to make from staff who will actually carry them out
- identify some potential strategies for dealing with staff resistance.

Organizational Readiness for Change

You have already started your assessment of the organization's readiness for change by asking questions about your position in it and the impact of your proposal. Now you need a framework for organizing information about all of the variables that determine whether or not the organization can or will support the proposed changes.

The framework that we chose was developed as a guide for innovation and change in mental health agencies (3), but can be applied equally well to permanent planning and foster care. It considers eight variables necessary for organizational change and is referred to by the acronym formed by the first letters of the variables -- AVICTORY, or: Ability, Values, Information, Circumstances, Timing, Obligation, Resistance, and Yield.

The AVICTORY model is built on the premise that an organization is a living system with a set of values and behavioral norms that are the sum of all the individual staff values and behaviors. Organizations go through developmental phases -- they have peak periods of growth followed by periods of stability or even stagnation. Public service organizations characteristically have periods of internal instability when changes in legislation, funding appropriations, or reorganizations occur. Some organizations respond to this instability as a challenge and enter a

growth cycle; others react by trying even harder to maintain the status quo. As you move through the AVICTORY variables, keep in mind how your organization tends to respond to external pressures and where it is in terms of its own history.

We'll discuss the variables as they would be ideally sequenced in an assessment.

OBLIGATION, the felt need to change.

Remember our earlier statement that your proposal for permanent planning will have to compete with change proposals from other staff? This variable encourages you to organize an argument that will answer the question "Why permanent planning and not another program innovation?" To build a successful argument, you'll need the right kinds of information, most of which can be obtained through a comprehensive needs assessment.

At this level, you want to convince others about the desirability of a permanent planning program and provide them with motivation to become involved. Some of that motivation will be based on wanting to see the organization do a better job of achieving its goals, and some of it will be based on personal needs or hidden agendas. Hidden agendas are a given in every planning situation. They can work for or against you, depending on how much credit you give their existence. We think a good question to keep in mind as you gather support is "What's in it for him?" The answers may provide you with important leverage later on.

INFORMATION, knowledge about the required pattern of action.

Throughout the entire planning cycle, one of your major tasks will be to provide the right information to the right people at the right time. For now, you should consider whether or not you have enough information about permanent planning and how it has been implemented in other organizations to make an educated guess about how it will work in this organization. (Again, part of that data will come from the needs assessment.) If you do, how will that information be made available to all of the staff who will be involved so that they understand what is to be changed and can challenge or support the information? Remember:

- the way information is packaged influences the way it is received, and
- different levels of staff have different informational needs.

VALUES, consistency between the change and values of the organization.

You will want to assess this variable from two perspectives: values toward change in general, and values toward permanent planning specifically. From either perspective, proposals for change that are inconsistent with the organization's values are not likely to be implemented.

When you assess the organization's values toward change in general, you should be the most interested in the top administrator because his values determine, in large part, how the organization promotes and responds to change. That is important information for you to have in planning implementation strategies. By being a staff member of the organization, you already have a lot of this information. All you need to do is think (objectively!) about "What is it really like to work here?" and "What happened the last time something new or different was tried here?"

The first question should get you thinking about the organization's psychological climate -- those factors that promote creativity on the part of individual staff:

- clearly defined organizational goals, objectives, and standards for performance,
- emphasis on personal responsibility,
- a reward system that recognizes good work.

The second question leads you to consider how the top administrator responds to change proposals. First, think of his decision-making behavior as being on a continuum from Consolidation, or implementing change with as little disruption to the present structure as possible, to Innovation, or the conscious search for ways to improve the organization's functioning. (12) Second, there are certain leadership characteristics associated with this continuum that can help you predict his response to change. Figure 4 shows the relationship between the two.

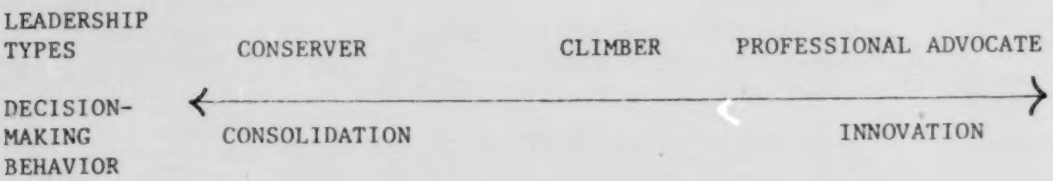

Figure 4: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP TYPES AND DECISION MAKING BEHAVIOR. Based on Patti's discussion of the concept (12).

Perhaps you can recognize some familiar patterns in the following examples:

> "My boss had been with the agency forever and had survived numerour reorganizations simply by never going out on a limb. He was not the kind of person that instinctively saw the merits of the idea -- we had to keep bombarding him with information about permanent planning. And even when we got him to move on it, the changes he was willing to make were small."

* * *

"All I had to do was convince him that permanent planning was the coming thing in foster care and that many other states were already in various stages of implementation. After that, he delegated all of the internal implementation to me. He had a lot of contacts in 'high places' that were valuable. My hunch was that permanent planning was OK as long as it made him look good."

* * *

"He kept asking me for more and more information -- really hard questions. But when he finally decided to support the program, he had a good blueprint for implementing it. In fact, he had thought of problems that hadn't occurred to me yet, as well as ideas for how they might be resolved so as to improve service delivery."

Of course, these examples are stereotypes of Conserver, Climber, and Professional Advocate behaviors and it is unlikely that any of them exist in a pure form. Even a general idea of how the top administrator (i.e., organization) responds to change is not enough to help you predict the response to permanent planning.

We said earlier that the organization's value system was a composite of the values of the individual staff who carry out its goals and objectives. Also included in that composite is the political body that establishes its rules and regulations; the judiciary that enforces them; and the community that supports the organization's existence. The resulting environment of the possible (5) determines whether or not the organization itself will be a barrier to permanent planning.

"In our state, we had several counties where you just couldn't consider bringing a petition to terminate parental rights into court. The judges represented the dominant belief in those counties that kids might have a right to permanent homes, but their parents' rights were even more important."

ABILITY, staff and fiscal resources.

If the obligation variable raises questions of "Should we do it?", then the ability variable asks "Can we do it?" Feasibility questions always seem easier to deal with when there is the possibility of new funds to support more manpower or physical facilities. We think it is a better policy to assess this variable from the perspective of "What can we do with existing resources?" Being able to prove that you have examined current resources will help build a stronger case for additional resources if they are indeed necessary. Again, a comprehensive needs assessment will help provide that answer.

CIRCUMSTANCES, or situations in the organization's environment.

This variable includes those factors that are likely to influence the proposal's future, but which are not under your control. We discussed some

of them under "values": organizational climate, style of leadership, community belief systems. Others may be reorganizations, funding cutbacks, and low morale among staff.

TIMING, predicting the most opportune time to implement.

This is another variable that will not be under your control. Many program planners think that organizational crises, such as funding cutbacks or political reorganizations, offer the best opportunities for change. Then change is likely to come from the top down and be structural in nature. In periods of non-crisis, change is likely to be from the bottom up and attitudinal in nature. (7)

You may be able to predict events that are likely to either help or hinder the proposal's future, such as the passage of new legislation or a change in decision-makers. These should be regarded as contingencies that may require several different strategies.

> "The Bureau Chief, who had not been supportive of our efforts, was due to retire in six months. The rumor was out that the Director of the Division was either going to promote one of the chief's cronies into the position or hire someone from the outside. Regardless of what he did, we figured we'd have the same sell job to do."

RESISTANCES, forces that hinder change.

Resistance to change is not always irrational, so a good place to start assessing this variable is to determine if all of the reasons for not implementing permanent planning have been considered.

A possible source of resistance that should be considered is the factor of "sunk costs," or the investments in money, time, or personal commitment made by the organization (or its members) to develop and maintain current service delivery practices. (12) Sunk costs help maintain the status quo unless decision-makers can be persuaded to sacrifice their investments.

> "A year before, the agency had invested in a huge, statewide effort to train caseworkers to work more effectively with foster parents. Part of our proposal included a similar effort for training caseworkers in permanent planning techniques. The initial reaction to that specific part was very negative.

We have already discussed other possible sources of resistance, i.e., the proposal challenges another subunit's turf; it challenges a specific individual's expertise or exposes his actions to question; or it violates

personal or professional values. (2) Still other sources of individual resistance are:

- apathy
- psychological investment in the status quo
- lack of information about the proposed change.

This variable should be assessed not only from the perspective of why the proposal might be resisted, but also in terms of who is likely to resist. Predicting who will resist helps you plan strategies for:

- who should approach the resister with what pro-change information. This is where your access to informal leadership will be very helpful to you, as you may not be as good a choice for this errand as someone else.
- how to orchestrate support for the proposal. Sometimes it is politically naive to approach a resister head-on yourself, when other events or support from other areas might be more persuasive. In other instances, if you have a good understanding of the resister's interests, it is possible to negotiate a political trade-off -- or exchange of support, information, or favor.
- how to contend with the resources that resisters are willing to commit to obstruct the change. If you really need support from this resister, your task early in the planning phases will be to find common ground on problem definition and solution; to accommodate his suggestions when possible; and to give him credit, even where it may not be due.

YIELD, or benefits to be gained from changing.

To a great extent, assessing "yield" may only be a further refinement of "obligation" arguments. Either or both must be coupled with accurate information about how to change.

Not everyone perceives the same benefits or rewards for changing. Your task will be, first, to identify as many rewards, direct or indirect, as possible for those individuals or groups likely to be affected by a permanent planning program. Second, you will want to refer to these rewards each time you approach a person or group for support.

> "Several line staff from the demonstration project commented that their morale at work had increased a great deal because they finally had evidence that they were accomplishing something. So when we were doing training, prior to going statewide, we made sure we included them as part of the training staff. They were able to be very persuasive with their own peers."

WORKSHEET IV - ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS FOR CHANGE

This worksheet will help you:

- assess your organization's readiness for change using the AVICTORY variables
- identify those variables that are likely to resist or facilitate implementing the proposal
- plan some initial strategies to maximize facilitating variables and minimize resisting variables.

Initial Needs Assessment

As we stated earlier, program organizing and planning activities overlap. A useful way of distinguishing them is to think of the former as organizing support and the latter as organizing information. Both support and information are used in making decisions about how the program will respond to the problem as it is defined by the organization. The "HOW" is essentially the design of the program or the match between the need generated by the problem and the resources the organization can make available to meet the need.

Initial data-gathering activities can begin any time during the Organizing Phase and extend well into the Program Planning Phase. There should be administrative approval and support for these activities, so that the resulting information has credibility for key decision-makers.

The following questions provide structure for how to begin data collection. (15):

- What do we want to know about the problem and our resources?
- What data do we need to gether?
- Where can we find the data?
- How can we obtain the data?

An example of how the first two questions might be organized is the "State Self-Assessment Guide" used by the Dissemination Project* to determine the extent of the elements needed to offset foster care drift in a given state:

*Dissemination and Utilization of Permanent Planning Strategies for Children in Long Term Foster Care (HEW Contract No. 105-77-1000).

an institutional framework, administrative resources, staff resources and effort, and goal-directed methods. (See Appendix B) Answers to these assessment items provide preliminary data about permanent planning needs and resources in your state that will make the program planning phase more meaningful to you.

Finding and obtaining the answers to some of the questions will require interaction with the staff who manage the organization's current information system. If that system is automated (computerized) you can expect to discover many obstacles to its effective use. Many of these obstacles can be reduced to the lack of a common language and unclear expectations between you, the unsophisticated user of the system, and data processing staff who are not sensitized to your informational needs. (9) Thus, including staff from the Research and Statistics or Data Processing Units at the beginning of planning the program can help you gather not only existing data but also plan for the program's information and evaluation needs.

Note that the Assessment Guide involves collecting data that must still be converted to information that can be used to support decision-making in the Planning and Implementation Phases. Such conversion involves the questions of how to analyze the data and methods for presenting the findings. What is most needed from decision-makers at this particular point in the planning cycle is permission to move into planning the program, so the key to dealing with analysis and presentation questions is this: There should be convincing evidence about the need for a program, as well as accurate information about existing and needed resources.

After permission is given to begin program planning, a more important question about information arises: How can findings be used to make judgments and recommendations regarding the design of the program? That question will be one of the subjects covered in the next section.

PHASE II: GENERAL PROGRAM PLANNING ACTIVITIES

If the initial needs assessment verifies the need for a program and there is administrative support for allocating resources to it, then planning activities can cycle into Phase II, where an actual program can be designed.

Most Organizing and Program Planning activities are essentially the same for either a demonstration program or a statewide (agency-wide) effort. Now, however, is the time to decide the scope of the program's effort, if that decision has not already been made. Although we suggested earlier that a demonstration program may be the preferred way to introduce permanent planning, every situation is unique. Your decision must be based on your assessment of the political climate, administration structure and support, fiscal and staff resources, as well as some of the issues discussed below.

Pros and Cons of Demonstration Programs

Earlier we stated that the organization is more likely to support a demonstration program that requires only partial resources that can be committed on a temporary basis. Demonstration programs tend to generate less resistance because of their limited impact on the overall functioning of the organization. They are also less complex and easier to manage so that their original purpose can be maintained and results evaluated.

A small working unit also increases program flexibility and promotes creativity on the part of program staff by involving them in the ongoing development and refinement of the program. The chance to field test various approaches and ideas generates valuable information for use in planning for statewide or agency-wide implementation. Another major advantage of a demonstration program is the chance to develop a core of highly trained, skilled staff who can provide leadership when the program is expanded.

On the other hand, demonstration programs run the risk of becoming isolated and insular. Top administrators may view them as easy to eliminate, or difficult to integrate into the organization because they are special or too different. A program that is seen as much more expensive, requiring skills far beyond the general level of staff training, or as very different from the general agency structure and function will not be seen as demonstrating or paving the way for agency-wide implementation. It will only have demonstrated what can be done under very special, ideal conditions.

Other potential pitfalls are the disruption of working relationships and communications between demonstration program staff and other staff because of the implied criticism inherent in the proposed change; jealousy and resentment about special assignments and working conditions; increased

demands on other agency staff and systems; or perceived competition with other established, highly valued programs. Considering these issues as you begin planning the program may stimulate ideas for ways to reduce or eliminate some of these pitfalls, and to anticipate and plan for others.

Elements of Program Planning

As shown in Figure 5, program planning activities involve combining support and information into a program design that is feasible in terms of agency resources. Program planning activities are characterized by a great deal of decision-making about design issues: who to serve, how to design staffing patterns, where to locate services, etc. Although it is beyond the scope of this Guide to tell you which way to decide on any of these issues, we can alert you to most of the design issues you will have to deal with as well as how to maximize your decision-making through the integration of people, information, and goals and objectives.

Who to involve in program planning. Although it is possible for one person to design the program, we recommend involving a small group of people who have information, need to be informed of the program's progress, have authority to facilitate decision-making, and have a stake in the outcome.

Note that these characteristics are parallel to those we outlined for task force members. Indeed, involving all or a part of the task force in program planning may be an excellent way to increase members' involvement and commitment to the program.

Depending on the task force's composition and purpose, you may want to consider other choices for this small planning body, such as key agency administrators. They meet all of the above criteria and their investment in permanent planning during the Planning Phase will increase support during Implementation.

Representatives from community agencies are also valuable as decision-makers, as they have knowledge about how external services will collaborate and interact with the program. They may come from the legal community, the court system, agencies that provide medical, psychological, or other treatment services to parents and children, as well as special interest groups such as foster care associations.

A critical group to include representation from during program planning is the staff who will actually direct, supervise, and provide permanent planning services. If the change agent will not also be the program manager, planning activities should not proceed further until the program manager is identified and able to participate in decision-making. Although there is no formula to use for exactly when further planning must wait for staff selection, a good rule of thumb is to reserve the hows -- the manner in

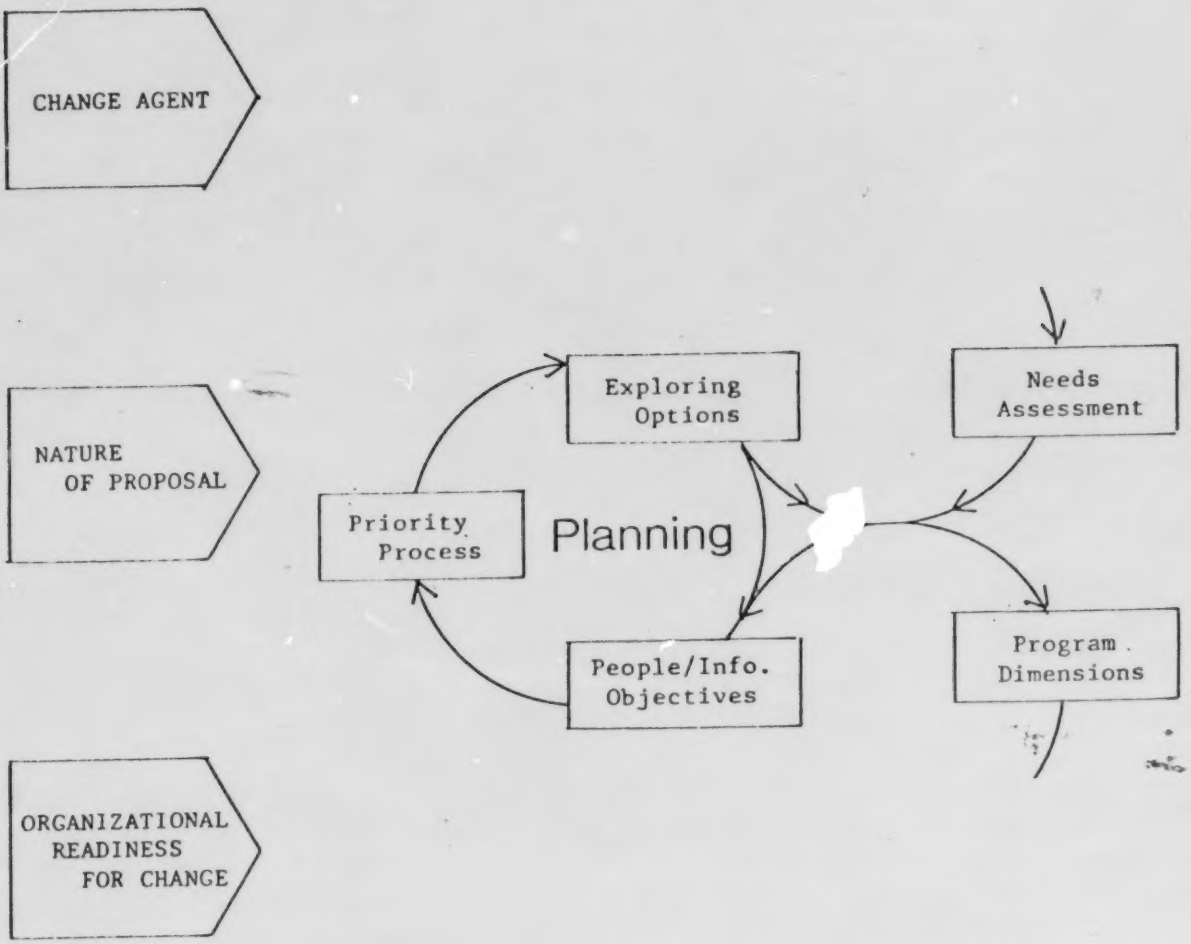

Figure 5: ACTIVITY PHASES IN PROGRAM PLANNING

which the program's intent will be implemented -- for those who will have to carry it out. The results of over-planning without program staff often includes delays, while staff redo the plan; unintended, undesirable outcomes from their lack of understanding; or plans that were not feasible.

Using Information for Decision-Making. As you collect data from the analysis of the organization, the needs assessment, the literature, and other sources, it must be organized in a way that is useful for making decisions about the program's design. We have provided a worksheet that illustrates one scheme for organizing data and identifying how it can be used in decision-making. In this scheme, problems are translated into needs. Resources include concrete fiscal resources as well as intangibles such as administrative support, existing staff skills, favorable climate for change, and supportive legislation. Knowledge of identifiable limitations is extremely useful at this stage because out of that knowledge will come a program design that is realistic and feasible. The decision to make is really a choice between alternative solutions to the original problem. Some decision-making theorists maintain that the best alternative is the one that will help achieve the most program objectives, or cause the least number of negative consequences to occur. (4) Thus, the program's goals and objectives must be more clearly defined before decision-making can be a meaningful activity.

WORKSHEET V - USING INFORMATION IN DECISION-MAKING

This worksheet will help you:

- identify major decisions to be made prior to program implementation
- identify the pros and cons of each decision to be made,
- establish relationships among decisions

Establishing Goals and Objectives. During the Organizing Phase and preliminary need assessment activities, proposals for change or formal memoranda may have been prepared which articulate the overall purpose and goals of the program. They may have included statements such as: "To provide a permanent plan for all children in foster care who are this agency's responsibility," or "To enhance and strengthen parental ability to provide a minimal sufficient level of care," or "To reduce foster care drift." If you have decided to begin with a demonstration program, you have added a companion planning goal to the service goals identified above: "To demonstrate the feasibility of a permanent planning program for statewide or agency-wide adoption."

These goal statements are not all of the same order. They will need to be translated into more specific objectives and activities so that the program's purpose can be put into operation. Figure 6 is a laundry list of areas where objectives and activities commonly need to be formulated.

Area	Includes questions about:
Case Selection	how cases are screened into the program
Direct Services	what happens to an individual case at the line level; how cases are reviewed and evaluated
Service Delivery Resources	what services will be provided by the agency; what external services and resources are required
Program Management	what are staff selection and training needs, resource development and public relations requirements; how the program will be monitored
Evaluation	whether program objectives are being achieved

Figure 6: COMMON AREAS FOR FORMULATING OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Formulating objectives and activities is often a frustrating, time-consuming task. It can be made less so if the following guidelines are followed: (4)

- objectives and activities should follow from a higher level objective or goal;
- they should be relatively independent of each other;
- they should be complete, or include all that should be accomplished; and
- they should be measurable.

We are assuming that you have already been exposed to the mechanics of writing program objectives and activities, but we have provided a worksheet that may be useful to you in gauging content, specificity, and utility in program planning.

WORKSHEET VI - ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

This worksheet will help you:

- identify the utility of establishing objectives and activities
- compare the objectives and activities you write for content and specificity.

Establishing measurable objectives and activities at this stage means that not only can the demonstration program be more carefully monitored but also the mechanisms for evaluating the program's effectiveness will be in place. (14) That is, you will be able to answer the question, "How well are we doing in relationship to what we set out to do?", after the program has been in operation for a period of time, and use that information for statewide or agency-wide implementation.

Program Design Issues. As we said, the major purpose for integrating people, information, and program objectives is to maximize decision-making about the design of the program -- the dimensions that describe it or define it as different from other programs. (1)

Program design includes the following dimensions: organizational context, location, internal decision-making processes, resources, staff, target population, program components, treatment strategies, an information system, and an evaluation plan. Once decisions have been made about each dimension, the program is ready for implementation. We have provided a worksheet to help you consider each dimension and decisions that may accompany it. As you move through the worksheet, keep two questions in mind:

- How does this decision relate to the goals and objectives of the demonstration program?
- How could this decision affect future statewide (agency-wide) implementation?

WORKSHEET VII - PROGRAM DIMENSIONS

This worksheet will help you:

- consolidate all of the preceding material into a comprehensive program design
- identify what decisions still need to be made prior to implementation.

PHASE III: PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Program implementation, when service delivery actually begins, is the focus of this final section of the Guide. As shown in Figure 7, we are concerned with those administrative activities that work towards the stabilization of the demonstration program, or the management tasks that must be accomplished by the program manager so that staff can deliver services. Just as we assumed that you were a change agent, we will assume that you are now in the role of program manager.

Practice Wisdom in Program Management

There are several factors about human service programs and the people who manage them that seem to hold true from setting to setting. We will review them here:

- Programs are built in increments. The point in time when enough permanent planning elements are in place to say that the program is operational may be hard to define. For our purposes, however, a program is operational and requires management when manpower and fiscal resources have been allocated to it.

- Programs, like organizations, move through developmental phases. That is, the kind of management that a demonstration program requires to survive is different from that of more stable, institutionalized programs. These differences must be taken into account by the program manager.

- Regardless of your expertise as a manager, programs are almost always contaminated by organizational problems beyond your control. Shifts in programmatic emphasis and funding, staff turnover, and political reorganizations are a few examples of such problems.

- Many times the program is only one of several job responsibilities that you have, and it must compete for your time, energy, commitment, and attention. Learning to manage this competition is a critical skill for you to develop in order to avoid crisis management.

- Program managers are often former direct service staff who have been promoted up the organizational hierarchy from caseworker to supervisor to administrator. They may have little or no formal preparation for their current assignment. We are not implying that a lack of preparation makes them less competent, but there may be too much tendency for these managers to view the interpersonal and analytic tasks in planning and managing from a

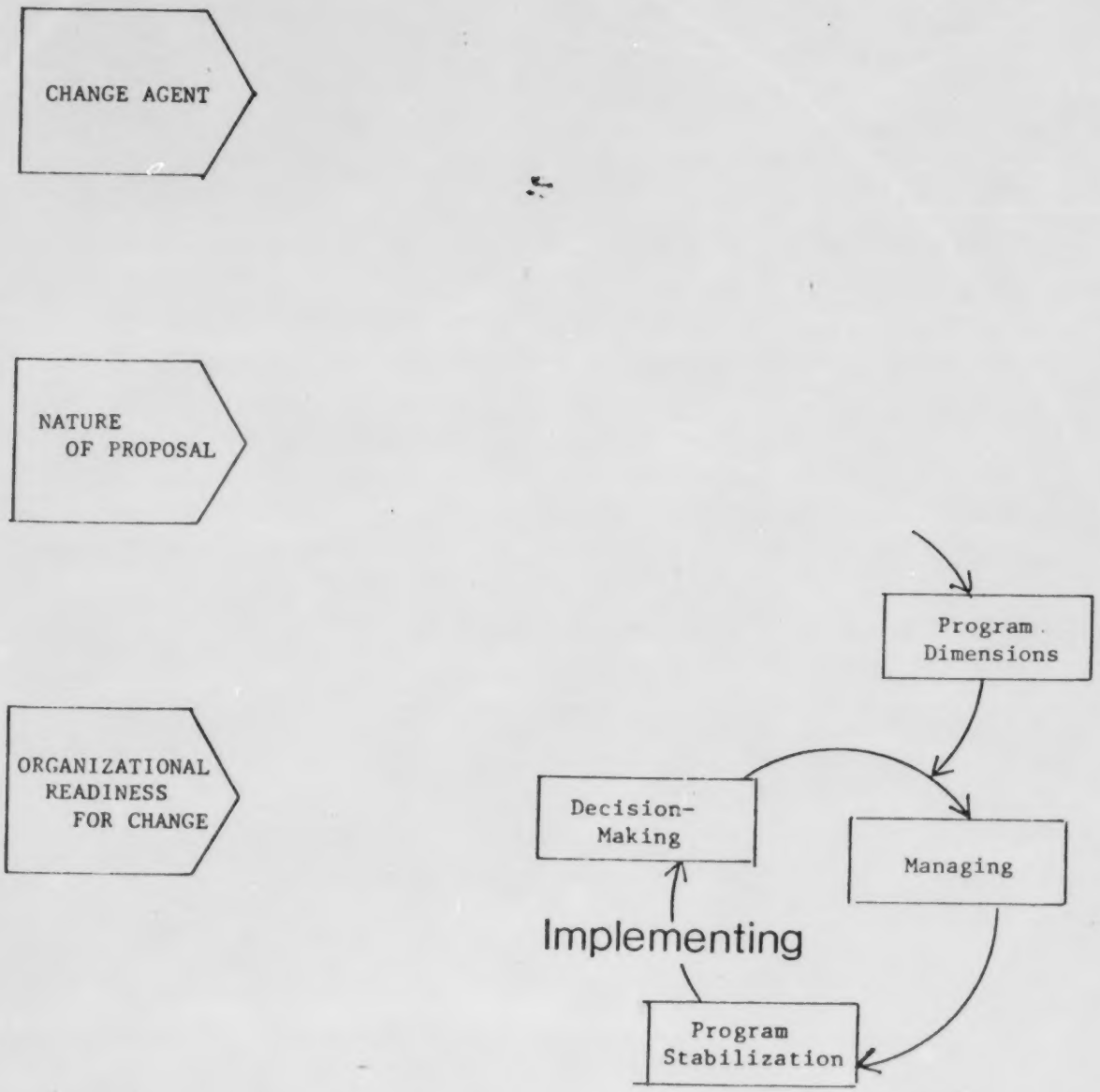

Figure 7: ACTIVITY PHASES IN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

clinical perspective. We think that adopting a new set of role expectations and performance requirements is a necessary step in developing effective management skills.

- Finally, as a program manager you have authority that you can delegate to subordinates and substantially more control over events than you did as a change agent. Although it is beyond the scope of the Guide to help you assess your belief system about authority, or leadership style, keep in mind that all of the material we presented earlier for assessing your superior's value system and decision-making behavior can be applied equally well to you by one of your subordinates. Thus, you may want to pursue some of the readings on "Leadership" included in the Bibliography.

Managing the Demonstration Program: Tasks and Decision-Making

Generally, the tasks involved in managing a program fall into the following categories: (10)

1. designing work patterns for staff
2. promoting effective staff performance
3. providing special information to staff about work requirements and program resources
4. initiating change based on program evaluation
5. handling disturbances
6. monitoring the program's environment
7. maintaining a network of organizational contacts
8. keeping program outsiders informed
9. negotiating for resources
10. serving as program figurehead, or resident expert.

These management tasks are more complex in a demonstration program, first, because there are no precedents for how they should be handled, and secondly, because few demonstration programs progress exactly as planned. Even before the program's monitoring system is fully operational, you may be faced with decisions for modifying staffing, service delivery, or resource allocation in order to meet program objectives. And these decisions will have to be made in the face of both program supporters and critics who are interested in its fate.

Decision-making, as a management function, is dependent on your interactions with other staff, the information you construct from program-monitoring data, and your own perceptual scheme and problem-solving habits. It may be further complicated by your personal investment in the design of the program. (In our experience, there is a strong correlation between high investment in program design and inability to listen to criticism about the program as its manager.) Thus, a function that is highly important to the program's success or failure, survival or dismantling, is in reality a very non-rational, subjective, personalized activity. Rather than worry about the subjectivity of decision-making, however, be concerned with maximizing effective decisions. We will discuss a number of things you can do to that end:

Maintain close communication with line staff and supervisors, especially if you provide no direct services yourself. When asked the right kind of question, line staff can describe trends in target populations or staff activities long before they appear in service delivery data. Secondly, visible interest in line staff activities and opinions helps prevent morale problems and can provide motivation.

As program designer, you may have had ideas about how services would be delivered that do not hold up in Implementation. Holding on to these ideas in the face of alternative solutions can be very detrimental to a demonstration program. You can offset the tendency to do this by keeping program goals foremost and creating a problem-solving climate where staff are encouraged to present proposals for change.

Learn to expect and predict side effects for every decision. The systemic nature of the program and the organization is such that a decision in one area almost always creates a problem in another. Planning for these contingencies should be a part of every decision you make.

Maintain close communication links with your peers and superiors. Earlier we discussed your need to know where competing needs and interests might be in the organization during the Organizing and Developmental Phases. This need will continue well into Implementation, as you negotiate with other program managers for limited agency resources necessary for the program's survival. Staying informed about what is happening in other areas improves your ability to bargain and compromise.

Consider your own time and energy as an important program resource that demands as careful monitoring as fiscal and manpower resources. Program managers often attend most to those areas that give them satisfaction, or are squeaky wheels. This behavior gives staff clues about what the real program priorities are, and they allocate their time and energy accordingly. Again, program goals should direct the use of everyone's time.

Promoting Effective Staff Performance. Since the ultimate success of a demonstration program depends on the line staff who deliver its services, staffing the program with competent, motivated manpower is a critical task. Another fair assumption to make is that, regardless of past experience or education, all staff will require a certain level of orientation or training to adequately perform required program activities. The combined tasks of selecting and training staff may be complicated by a number of factors. For example, unless you have funds for hiring new staff, many of your subordinates will have transferred into the program from another, retaining some or all of their former job responsibilities. They also will have brought with them mixed feelings about being part of an untried, unknown program, especially if they feel they have risked job security in making the transfer. This ambivalence is likely to surface when problem solutions or the program's direction seem unclear to them. Your ability to provide leadership or convey a sense of stopping the buck at these times will be a critical skill.

You can influence the degree to which these combined factors create obstacles in staffing the program. For example, the following characteristics have been identified by several permanent planning supervisors as characteristic of successful line staff: high energy level; attention to factual data; ability to generate emotional support among colleagues; pragmatic approach to casework activities; and eclectic theoretical bases. Certainly not every foster care caseworker or supervisor has the entire mix of these characteristics, nor the philosophical base to support permanent planning. At the point of hiring, or more likely transferring, staff into the program, you might want to consider conducting a screening process for both caseworkers and supervisors that delineates expected attitudes, skills, and tasks for all staff. As much as possible, this process should allow potential staff to select themselves in or out of the program.

> "We did a pretty good job of describing permanent planning casework and asked those line staff who were interested in transferring to the program to attend a series of three orientation and training sessions. Based on what we knew about successful caseworkers in other projects, we could identify our best candidates by the end of the second session."

High turnover or inadequate performance at the level of line staff may be a symptom of inadequate motivating, evaluating, and reward systems throughout the entire organization. If these are characteristic of your organization, you can expect that they will affect motivation within the demonstration program unless you take corrective action.

First, remember that as program manager, you are the major source for determining the program's psychological and emotional climate. The way in which you attend to the program's goals, objectives and standards, the emphasis you put on personal responsibility, and the way in which you reward or recognize good work set the standard for everyone else.

Second, develop a reliable communication system for the program and its staff. As program manager, you may be the only representative of the program with access to all sources of information, both internal and external, and you will need to make decisions about who needs to know what. Your objectives are to: 1) head off crises generated by inaccurate rumors; 2) clarify expectations and requirements; and 3) ensure that staff have adequate information to do their jobs.

Third, do not ignore or dilute the training and support needs of supervising staff. Because of their proximity to line staff they can be very influential in the development of the program's motivating, evaluating, and reward systems. They also have their own support and reward needs that must be attended to if they are to be sensitive to the same needs in line staff.

Motivation for line staff often comes from access to supervisors who are as skilled in leadership and team-building as they are knowledgeable about line staff work. This is especially true in permanent planning, with its emphasis on shared decision-making among line staff, supervisors, and agency consultants. Shared decision-making is a means of expanding responsibility in difficult cases beyond the individual caseworker, and a vehicle for:

- enlarging the pool of emotional support available to line staff;
- setting standards for service delivery; and
- providing for the exchange of newly developing knowledge and skills among staff.

Thus, effective line staff performance depends on a supervisory structure that has education, administrative, and supportive components. (8) An example of this structure is shown below in Figure 8.

COMPONENT	OBJECTIVES
Administrative	To provide the organizational structure and access to agency resources that will facilitate the caseworker's job.
	Example: To reinforce the need for periodic case screenings, supervisors and staff did them in groups for a period of time until there was a consensus that everyone used the same criteria to identify permanent planning cases.
Educational	To provide knowledge and skills required to do the job.
	Example: We arranged for inexperienced line staff to follow a peer through the whole procedure of

Figure 8 (continued)

COMPONENT	OBJECTIVES
Educational (cont.)	going to court before doing it on their own; we even role-played testifying with them so they would have a better idea of what to expect.
Supportive	To provide psychological and interpersonal support that enables the caseworker to mobilize emotional energy.
	Example: I encouraged supervisors to be available for talking through a difficult task before a staff member left the office and to debrief or whatever when she returned. I didn't want staff to take work problems home with them.

Figure 8: EXAMPLES OF ADMINISTRATIVE, EDUCATION, AND SUPPORTIVE OBJECTIVES AND BEHAVIORS. Based on Kadushin's discussion of the concept (8)

Whether you are a unit supervisor or a consultant from further up the organizational hierarchy, there will be many times when you will need to ensure that the original goal of permanent planning does not get lost or sabotaged by ineffective conflict resolution, inadequate information about what is required, or even by someone's hidden agenda.

> "Through my 'circuit riding' from county to county consulting with permanent planning units, I identified one or two where the program was floundering because the supervisors knew nothing about group process and wasted staff time in nonproductive meetings. In both cases, I convinced them to have staff meetings when I would be there. My plan was to act as the informal leader to get the group moving again and model task group leadership for the supervisors. But I had to be very careful not to take over completely out of my own frustration."

Designing Work Patterns for Staff. The real work of permanent planning occurs between client and caseworker, so procedures for how cases are identified, how they are assigned, and how they are monitored, i.e., work patterns, can not be left to develop by chance. A procedure for identifying cases is a program design issue that had to be resolved prior to implementation. Case assignment and monitoring procedures, however, often need to be experimented with to find the process that will best fit a unit's needs.

Case assignment issues that need to be resolved include these questions: Should caseworkers have mixed caseloads, or should they work only with permanent planning cases? And, should a permanent planning caseworker carry the entire case (natural parents, child, and foster parents) or should cases be split between caseworkers?

Answers to these questions depend on agency resources and individual preferences and skills. In general, mixed caseloads seem to prevent caseworker burnout simply by providing a variety of situations with which to work. Mixed caseloads also are one way to prevent the identification of permanent planning caseworkers as being special or different from their peers. That is, the halo effect that often surrounds demonstration programs and their staff is avoided.

Finally, a mixed caseload system allows the supervisor leeway in assigning permanent planning cases to caseworkers who may need and want to test out their skills gradually.

On the other hand, permanent planning demands considerable attention from the individual caseworker. Other assignments can seriously curtail the time and energy she has available for permanent planning cases. This is particularly true for cases that will move into court proceedings. Unmixed caseloads have an additional advantage of allowing caseworkers to specialize in permanent planning techniques and skills. As they become experts, they can assume supervisory responsibilities for caseworkers new to permanent planning, which is, in effect, an opportunity for job enrichment and career development.

The second question, dealing with split cases, relates to the concept of shared goals and communication among staff. When cases are split so that one caseworker relates to the natural parents and another to the child and foster parents, there must be a process of parallel casework planning in support of the same goals. The resulting dialogue between caseworkers can be a useful source for peer supervision and support. It is also an expensive use of agency time and can be a source of considerable conflict if caseworkers vary in their values, attitudes, and skills in permanent planning -- to say nothing of the problems that staff from other agencies face in coordinating casework efforts and resources. A very powerful argument against splitting cases has been made by permanent planning caseworkers who found that weekly contact with the child helped keep their casework focused on his need for a permanent home, as well as providing a critial communication link between foster parents, natural parents, and the agency.

As we mentioned earlier, most permanent planning units will need time to evolve a case assignment process that best fits their situation. Experimenting with alternatives is often a way for staff to test out their commitment to the program and the sense of creativity that often develops in demonstration programs. The criterion for accepting their solution should always be the extent to which it maximizes program goals and objectives.

Permanent planning succeeds as a program to the extent that each case has a time-limited treatment plan with carefully monitored goals. Once a case is identified, either at intake or through case screening, monitoring the case is the initial responsibility of the caseworker and supervisor.

Based on the premise that inadequate case monitoring at the line level is one cause of foster care drift, procedures for reviewing and evaluating the status of cases must be carefully designed. Two major problems have been frequently encountered:

- Lack of knowledge of specific techniques for how to evaluate cases; and
- staff resistance to accountability measures they perceive to be impositions on their professional turf.

These knowledge and attitudinal barriers to active case monitoring are best dealt with by a combination of training and administrative support when case screenings, case reviews, or other monitoring procedures are first introduced.

> "Two of the areas we emphasized in training sessions with line staff were periodic case screenings between caseworkers and supervisors to ensure that permanent planning cases were being identified; and secondly 'tickler' files for all permanent planning cases to ensure that casework events were happening as planned or scheduled. I would say that we more or less retrained caseworkers how to manage their caseloads.
>
> What we're working on now is a way to provide periodic reports to line staff out of the program's information system that will respond to their need to know what happens to the data they supply to administration. We want to reinforce the idea that something really does happen to the forms that they complete on each case."

Handling Disturbances. It can be difficult to maintain the initial excitement of observing the transformation of a proposal into an active service delivery program when the program itself begins to generate problems, both internally and externally. Regardless of the adequacy of the program's design, the level of support for it, or your contingency planning, Murphy's Law will prevail: If anything can go wrong, it will. A case blows up and the program gets adverse publicity; a demonstration site decides not to participate after all; staff members feel overwhelmed by caseloads and their morale deteriorates.

In the middle of these, or other unwanted problems, program managers have a natural tendency to find a convenient scapegoat rather than analyzing them to see if they offer useful information for modifying either program design or managerial style. For example, low staff morale may be due to large caseloads, which are caused by the scarcity of organizational resources. But it may also be due to inadequate case assignment procedures or lack of supportive supervision within the program. A demonstration site may pull out of the program for a variety of reasons, one of which could be your insensitivity to their need to make program design decisions that fit their situation.

The stability of a program is often fostered when you demonstrate your willingness to assume responsibility for your share of the problem (on behalf of the program) to staff members, supporters, and critics. These are the times when you should have access to a consultant, such as another program manager or a superior, who can help evaluate the situation from a more objective perspective before you react to a problem situation as being outside of your control.

Program Stabilization

A demonstration program in permanent planning will require about eighteen months* to achieve some of the original goals outlined earlier: field testing various approaches to permanent planning; developing a core of skilled staff; and demonstrating the feasibility of permanent planning for a statewide effort. There are some factors that signal when the time is right to consider statewide implications:

- Top administrators show increased interest in service activity results.
- There are requests for more information and/or involvement from potential demonstration sites.
- Internally, there is growing consensus that staff members "have it together" or "know what works and what doesn't." As a program manager, you will have more evidence of their commitment to program goals and identification with the program per se.

These three factors are not necessarily spontaneous occurrences -- they occur more often when the program manager puts time and energy into mainmaining a network of organizational contacts, keeping program outsiders informed, and providing a motivational climate for staff members.

The move to statewide or agency-wide implementation will bring you full circle to the original starting point in this Guide. That is, you will have to reassume the role of change agent and proceed through the same planning phases as before -- this time from the vantage point of knowing how and where all of the permanent planning elements come together in your organization.

To a great extent, innovations like permanent planning depend on the skills and commitment of staff members who advocate for their acceptance into existing organizational structures. The belief in an idea whose time has

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*As recommended by field consultants with the Dissemination Project.

come often supplies the energy and creativity to deal with the scarce resources and overwhelming need that characterize many human service programs today.

> "When I think about the numbers of kids today in foster care who don't have to be there, I am convinced all over again of the need to keep plugging away at this. I think permanent planning can make a difference in those statistics. It's hard not to evangelize about this, but I really want our program to prevent some of the human suffering that doesn't need to be, the loss of opportunity that doesn't need to happen. . ."

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APPENDIX A - WORKSHEETS

WORKSHEETS I - FORMAL AND INFORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS

A. On the page provided, sketch your formal organizational chart using Figure 2 in the text as a guide. You will want to show the prescribed chain of command between you and your superiors, you and your peers, and you and your subordinates.

B. On your chart, identify the units or program where those superiors, peers, and subordinates are located who will need to:

1) approve or sign-off on your proposal
2) be informed about its progress
3) be involved in its development
4) implement its intent
5) other _____

C. Using the units or programs that you've identified in "B" above, sketch a second chart to represent an informal organizational chart. In this sketch you will want to identify the names of the most influential staff members in these units or programs -- the informal leaders. Note that they may not be the head of the unit or program.

D. Once you have identified these informal leaders, you are ready to think about your access to them. Access routes commonly require a degree of physical proximity (your offices are in the same location, you are brought together in the same meetings, you socialize together at lunch or coffee breaks) or a linkage through a third party (you know someone who knows the informal leader). A rule of thumb for determining your access to informal leaders is this: You have access when you do not need to plot how you will get their attention.

1) Who are the informal leaders you can approach directly?

2) Who are the informal leaders you can not approach directly?

FORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

INFORMAL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

WORKSHEET II - BUILDING A STRUCTURE

A. Have I decided that a task force would be an asset to me as a change agent and program manager? YES ____ NO, because (list at least two reasons for your decision)

1) _____

2) _____

Would I prefer to have a task force for political reasons only - to lend political credibility to the proposed permanent planning program?

YES, because _____

Or, do I want a task force that does actual work?

YES, because _____

What are some examples of the work the task force would do?

Should the task force have a formal structure (chairperson, regularly scheduled meetings, etc.) or be an ad hoc group that I call together when I need to?

FORMAL _____ AD HOC _____

B. Do I have authority from my administrator to solicit members for a task force?

YES _____ NO _____

Have I asked for his input about possible members? YES ____ NO ____

Is there a clear understanding between us as to the range of the task force's activities and authority? What is my evidence for the understanding?

YES, because _____

No, because _____

_____

C. On the page provided, list potential task force members using this format:

NAME	TITLE or AFFILIATION
Jane Doe	Adoption Specialist, State child welfare program
John Smith	Chairperson, Coalition for Children

Sometimes it is possible to categorize your list of potential names into "first choice" members (people you will approach first) and "second choice" members (people you will approach only if others turn you down). Try to divide your list of names into these two categories:

FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE
Jane Doe	John Smith

Here are some characteristics that all potential members may have in common:

a. They have access to information or other resources that you need.
b. They have a stake in the outcome, i.e., a permanent planning program would affect their area of responsibility.
c. They have decision-making authority whether or not to implement the program.
d. They are able to influence decision-makers both within the organization and outside.
e. They are a close colleague; you have worked well with this person before on other projects.
f. Other _____

Now go back to your list of First and Second choice members and see how many of these characteristics apply to each name. Generally speaking, the more characteristics behind a person's name, the more likely he is a good choice for a member. Do your results change your ideas about who you initially categorized as First or Second choice members?

D. How large a group is the resulting task force?_____

Is the size of the group compatible with what you have decided you want them to do?

What logistic problems do you need to consider in convening the task force (example, travel, size of room, percentage of members expected to attend meetings)?

Given the purpose of your task force, what are some ideas for structuring the agenda for their first meeting?

BUILDING A STRUCTURE

Potential Task Force Members

Title or Affiliation

First Choice Members
(characteristics)

Second Choice Members
(characteristics)

Revised List

WORKSHEET III - DEALING WITH STAFF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

A. On the page provided, sketch out some of the new or different tasks that staff will have to accomplish for permanent planning to succeed. Categorize staff into specific units, and attach numbers of staff involved, if you can.

Here are some examples:

All permanent planning supervisors initiate shared decision-making as part of new case management procedures. (Approximately five people)

All foster care caseworkers in the state child welfare system screen their caseloads to identify the initial target population of permanent planning cases. (Approximately 150 people)

The clerical staff member assigned to the permanent planning unit prepares a weekly tickler report reminding permanent planning caseworkers of specific action to be taken on behalf of a client. (1 person)

B. Next, think about the new behaviors or work situations - the changes in the status quo - that can actually result from these tasks. Resistance comes from negative attitudes towards those changes. For example, a staff member might resist a change because it:

a. contradicts existing policy or procedure

b. alters the way work is done on a regular basis

c. requires new work relationships with other staff

d. requires additional work on a periodic basis

e. increases or decreases areas of staff responsibility or authority

f. results in exposure of previous work performance

g. results in more exposure of current work performance

h. other _____

Which of these sources of resistance applies to the tasks you have outlined?

C. There are two major strategies for dealing with staff resistance: Information and/or Involvement. Information strategies can range from periodic reports, newsletters, and memos to knowledge and skill training. Involvement strategies can range from soliciting staff input with a questionnaire to membership on a task force or other decision-making group.

Next to the tasks you've outlined, try to identify the changes that they imply for the staff members involved (the sources of resistance). Then decide whether or not an information or involvement strategy (or combination) is required. We've provided a sample.

TASK	CHANGES	STRATEGY
All permanent planning supervisors initiate shared decision-making as part of new case management procedures.	contradicts existing procedure alters the way work is done requires new work relationships requires additional work may expose previous work performance may expose current work performance	Have a one-day workshop with five people involved to: 1) discuss the rationale for shared decision-making; 2) how it will affect their present supervisory styles; and 3) provide training in the mechanics. Follow-up with each individual at a later date.
All foster care caseworkers in the state child welfare system screen their caseloads to identify the initial target population of permanent planning cases	requires additional work on a periodic basis may expose previous work performance	Preliminary memo outlining rationale for case screening and time frame. Meet with representative group to discuss memo, case screening instrument, time frame. Second memo describing any adjustments to plan, sample case screening instrument attached. Third memo announcing start-up; site visits to handle data collection problems. Fourth memo announcing case screening results.

STAFF RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

TASK(S)	CHANGES	STRATEGY

WORKSHEET IV – ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS FOR CHANGE

Move through the self-report instrument that follows as quickly as possible, answering each statement only for yourself, not how you think other individuals would answer or what the official policy is.

A V I C T O R Y Self-Report Instrument*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. In the past, staff objections to change have been intense.	SD	D	A	SA
2. Administrators here are generally unable to provide effective leadership to the staff.	SD	D	A	SA
3. Generally, one's salary and chances for promotion depend on how well one does one's job.	SD	D	A	SA
4. Permanent Planning might lead to greater recognition and rewards to those who deserve it.	SD	D	A	SA
5. All too often, supervision is less than satisfactory.	SD	D	A	SA
6. A new service in the organization is currently being planned.	SD	D	A	SA
7. I have yet to be convinced on the alleged benefits of permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
8. Turnover and/or absenteeism has been a problem here.	SD	D	A	SA

---

*Based on the "Organizational Readiness to Accept Program Evaluation" Questionnaire developed at the Program Evaluation Resource Center, 501 Park Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415. The instrument is derived from Dr. Howard Davis' AVICTORY model of organizational change.

9. There are at least five different kinds of jobs or positions in this organization. SD D A SA

10. There's nothing wrong with our organization that some personnel changes wouldn't fix. SD D A SA

11. It's not clear from the information we now have what should be done to make the organization more effective. SD D A SA

12. Our activities with each client are recorded at least fairly systematically. SD D A SA

13. Installing a procedure for permanent planning would enhance the stature of our organization. SD D A SA

14. Some of the staff work is quite routine and almost anyone could be trained to do it. SD D A SA

15. There isn't time available to carefully plan a system for permanent planning. SD D A SA

16. Our organization has a good reputation among the people it serves. SD D A SA

17. There are administrators here who oppose the changes that are needed. SD D A SA

18. Permanent planning skills currently held by existing staff are sufficient to do the job. SD D A SA

19. This organization has fairly good reason to think of itself as innovative, progressive, and foward-looking. SD D A SA

20. No additional time and money can be made available for permanent planning. SD D A SA

21. This organization has good working relations with other organizations that we need cooperation from. SD D A SA

22. This organization has not been able to reach its intended audience as well as it should. SD D A SA

23. We have the resources to bring in a consultant to help plan and implement a procedure for permanent planning. SD D A SA

24. The demand for our services exceeds what we can deliver. SD D A SA

25.	A client-need survey would probably suggest our program should change or expand its services.	SD	D	A	SA
26.	It's been extremely difficult in the past to bring about needed change.	SD	D	A	SA
27.	Staff members presently have to do too much paperwork.	SD	D	A	SA
28.	The job duties of most positions are not clearly spelled out and adhered to.	SD	D	A	SA
29.	Most of the objections one hears about permanent planning are really pretty irrational.	SD	D	A	SA
30.	Some money could probably be made available to provide training for staff in permanent planning skills.	SD	D	A	SA
31.	In the past, when changes in procedure were begun, the staff was adequately prepared.	SD	D	A	SA
32.	Our organization has a good reputation in the community.	SD	D	A	SA
33.	This organization has many serious problems.	SD	D	A	SA
34.	The goals or mission of the organization are fairly clearly stated.	SD	D	A	SA
35.	In a crisis, our people typically pull together.	SD	D	A	SA
36.	It would be difficult to implement a procedure for permanent planning without seriously disrupting other activities.	SD	D	A	SA
37.	Supervisors typically make decisions without consulting the subordinates who are affected.	SD	D	A	SA
38.	There is a satisfactory procedure for communicating project information to those who need it.	SD	D	A	SA
39.	Most of the staff members can personally identify with the goals of the organization.	SD	D	A	SA
40.	This organization is greatly understaffed.	SD	D	A	SA
41.	Salaries, working conditions, and benefits are satisfactory to me.	SD	D	A	SA

42.	Permanent planning would only increase the work load.	SD	D	A	SA
43.	Progress reports are regularly made to top administrators, legislators, clients, the community, etc.	SD	D	A	SA
44.	The amount of resistance in the organization to permanent planning should not be a deterrent to pursuing a policy for permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
45.	The staff cares about the success of this organization.	SD	D	A	SA
46.	There is a good deal of mutual distrust between the administrators and the staff.	SD	D	A	SA
47.	It is imperative that something be done soon to make our organization work better.	SD	D	A	SA
48.	Permanent planning is just a fad that hopefully will die down soon.	SD	D	A	SA
49.	There is very little information on who uses our services.	SD	D	A	SA
50.	We use a fairly good system to keep track of what happens with clients who use our services.	SD	D	A	SA
51.	Some of the staff positions are challenging and demand responsible and creative people.	SD	D	A	SA
52.	If we do permanent planning, it would have to be with the resources presently available.	SD	D	A	SA
53.	Most of the administrators probably would not want permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
54.	Permanent planning would pave the way to better service for our clients.	SD	D	A	SA
55.	There would be a 'mutiny' among staff members if we introduced a procedure for permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
56.	Once a client leaves our program (or uses our services), we seldom hear from him/her again.	SD	D	A	SA
57.	The only reason top administrators here would approve permanent planning would be to impress others.	SD	D	A	SA

58.	An outside consultant would have to assist us in developing plans for permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
59.	No one presently on the staff is sufficiently knowledgeable in the permanent planning procedures we need.	SD	D	A	SA
60.	Some of the people here have good reason to fear permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
61.	I enjoy working with this organization.	SD	D	A	SA
62.	We could probably get additional or renewed funding if we carry out a plan for permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
63.	It is difficult to have a complaint heard and dealt with fairly in this organization.	SD	D	A	SA
64.	This organization is so riddled with bureaucratic red tape it would be difficult to bring about constructive change.	SD	D	A	SA
65.	Salaries and employment benefits here are at least competitive with other organizations of this kind.	SD	D	A	SA
66.	Some of the administrators have been here too long.	SD	D	A	SA
67.	Most changes in procedure get implemented fairly smoothly.	SD	D	A	SA
68.	We have a dedicated and hard-working staff.	SD	D	A	SA
69.	We have recently received (or expect to receive) new monies for the purpose of permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
70.	This would be a good time to begin (or renew or intensify) work on permanent planning.	SD	D	A	SA
71.	Permanent planning could easily result in lost jobs.	SD	D	A	SA
72.	The staff in this organization generally work well with each other.	SD	D	A	SA
73.	This organization has failed to live up to the hopes it originally had for itself.	SD	D	A	SA
74.	Whenever someone tries to do something different around here, she/he is met with resistance and hostility.	SD	D	A	SA

Now go back through the self-report instrument and take note of those statements that triggered a response from you such as "That might help (or hurt) us in implementing permanent planning." (They are likely to be the "strongly agree or strongly disagree" responses.) List several of those statements in the appropriate columns below, along with some ideas for a potential strategy. We've provided a sample.

RESISTING	FACILITATING	STRATEGY
The only reason top administrators here would approve permanent planning is to impress others.		Stress how many other states are in the process of implementing permanent planning.
	We use a fairly good system to keep track of what happens with clients who use our services.	Consult with data processing to see if the current system can be adapted to meet our informational needs.

ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS FOR CHANGE

RESISTING	FACILITATING	STRATEGY

WORKSHEET V - USING INFORMATION IN DECISION-MAKING

The scheme for using this worksheet is covered in the text. We have provided a sample decision area to illustrate its use. As you move through defining each problem area into a decision, you will begin to see how decisions have an impact on each other.

PROBLEM	NEED	RESOURCES	LIMITATIONS	DECISION TO BE MADE
How to establish criteria for selecting demonstration program cases?	357 children in this state have been identified as meeting general screening criteria: in care for more than one year; considered adoptable; under 12 years old	Almost half of these children live in the five counties chosen as demonstration counties. Each county has agreed to free one staff member to do permanent planning.	We think the ratio of permanent planning cases per worker should be about 10:1. We are now in excess of that.	Should we develop additional screening criteria, or should we leave case selection to chance?

USING INFORMATION IN DECISION-MAKING

PROBLEM	NEED	RESOURCES	LIMITATIONS	DECISION TO BE MADE

WORKSHEET VI - ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

We have provided a sample objective and activity to illustrate the use of the worksheet. Our sample is a program management objective based on the need for current, reliable information about clients and staff activities. In the sample, there is a hypothetical form already in existence that the program can use for client tracking purposes. The trigger in the sample is the regularity of the monthly report prepared by the data clerk. Since staff responsibilities for the report's preparation is clearly spelled out, the program manager can identify the source of the problem if the form is late or not forthcoming, and modifications can be made, if needed.

OBJECTIVE (desired end state)	Information about client tracking, client characteristics, and staff activities will be available on a regular basis.
SUB-OBJECTIVE, CLIENT TRACKING (What Will Happen)	Data about the current number of program cases and the status of each will be summarized
(By When)	every 30 days
(As Measured by)	monthly report
(At What Level)	all cases
ACTIVITIES (Who Will Do What)	Caseworkers will complete Form PWB109-A on all cases and submit completed forms to the data clerk by the 15th working day of each month. Data clerk summarizes and prepares report for program manager by the last working day of each month.

ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

OBJECTIVE (desired end state)	
SUB-OBJECTIVE (What Will Happen) (by when) (as measured by) (at what level)	
ACTIVITIES (Who Will Do What)	
OBJECTIVE (desired end state)	
SUB-OBJECTIVE (What Will Happen) (by when) (as measured by) (at what level)	
ACTIVITIES (Who Will Do What)	

WORKSHEET VII - PROGRAM DIMENSIONS

I. Organizational Context

A. Where should the demonstration program be located within the overall administrative structure of the organization?

B. Has the program manager been identified?

What should be the range of her authority?

II. Location

A. Will the program be decentralized into several sites?

B. Where will it be housed?

C. Is there adequate visibility to avoid isolation and insulation?

III. Decision-Making Process

A. Can the program manager and staff develop decision-making processes that will meet program needs, such as shared decision-making, with the support of agency administration?

IV. Resources

A. Will the organization support the demonstration program for a sufficient period of time?

B. How stable are fiscal resources?

C. What is the extent of intangible resources such as access to information, staff motivation, etc.?

V. Staff

A. How many staff can be assigned to the program?

B. What resources can be allocated to staff development and training?

C. Should we recruit caseworkers with the highest quotient of permanent planning skills available to increase the probability of program success, or recruit staff who are more representative of agency manpower?

VI. Target Population

A. What criteria have been established for identifying permanent planning cases?

B. What further criteria do we need to decide which cases actually receive services?

C. Have we established ways to select a target population that resembles a cross-section of all foster care cases?

D. Who will monitor these criteria? Using what methods?

VII. Program Components

A. What are the different activities the program will pursue?

1. Direct treatment_____

2. Referral and coordination of services with other agencies____

3. Consultation ___

4. Legislative or policy changes ___

5. In-service training ___

6. Cooperating with the legal community ___

7. Community education ___

VIII. Treatment Strategies

A. What direct services will be offered by the program?

B. What direct services will be offered by other agencies?

C. Who will coordinate service delivery from other agencies?

IX. Information System

A. What information do I have already in the form of existing data and reporting requirements?

B. What information will I need for program evaluation, long-range planning, or other case management functions?

C. How can I meet these information needs with the least amount of time and cost? Do I have technical assistance and consultation available to me to decide?

X. Program Evaluation

A. Do I have mechanisms for evaluating program EFFORT?

example: How many permanent planning cases have been identified?
How many cases does each caseworker carry?
How many children have permanent plans been made for?

B. Do I have mechanisms for evaluating program PERFORMANCE?

example: Of all children returned to their natural parents, how many are still there one year later?

C. Do I have mechanisms for evaluating program EFFICIENCY?

example: What is the average cost per child in terms of staff time in permanent planning?
How does this compare to foster care maintenance costs?

D. Do I have mechanisms for evaluating program PROCESS?

example: Do parents who sign a written agreement have their children returned to them more often than those who do not sign an agreement?

E. Do I have technical assistance and consultation available to me to help plan for program evaluation?

APPENDIX B

A STATE SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

A STATE SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE*

There is nothing new about seeking permanent placements for dependent children. However, the practice is a complex and demanding one at best. Particularly so when responsibility for it involves at least four major institutions which make up a state's child welfare system: the social service agencies, the legislative assembly, the legal profession, and the state judiciary. Though the efforts of such institutions are frequently uncoordinated, and may even work at cross-purposes, they nevertheless carry the public responsibility for protective services, foster care, and adoption, and for supplying the myriad support services upon which such programs depend. Thus, while these major state institutions supply the resources for permanent planning, it is also among or within these same institutions that critical barriers to the permanent planning process are found.

On the following pages is a self-assessment guide for appraising the foster care systems in your state. The process of completing the guide should raise some questions while focusing on the strengths and problem areas within your system. The resulting description should help you determine how best to approach permanent planning in your state, and should help set priorities for developing critical aspects of your foster care program. The guide also will help our staff prepare to work with you on developing a technical assistance plan to support your state's permanent planning efforts.

Also, please keep in mind that there is nothing sacrosanct or immutable about this guide. Some questions may not apply to your state; data may not be available to answer others. We may have omitted questions which would lead to a truer picture of the way your state functions. Therefore, we invite you to make estimates when you do not have precise data; to comment freely, to supplement our short answer check-offs; and to add any information that you think is significant. In short, complete the assessment as best you can, to reflect the unique workings of your state system.

The format combines checkoff answers with space for additional facts and comments. Questions are grouped under headings as follows:

A. General Information about Foster Care
B. Caseloads
C. Support Staff and Agency Policy
D. Options for Exiting from Foster Care
E. Community Resources
F. The Legal Process
G. Adoption
H. Case Review
I. Client Tracking and Information Systems

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*Prepared by the project "Dissemination and Utilization of Permanent Planning Strategies for Children in Long-Term Foster Care," Regional Research Institute for Human Services, Portland State University.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT FOSTER CARE

1) On these dates during the past five years:

	June 1972	June 1977
• How many children were in foster family homes in the state?		
• How many children entered foster family care that month?		
• How many children exited from foster care that month?		
• What was the average age of the children?		
• What was the average length of time these children had spent in foster family care?		
• How many (or what percent) of these children were in foster family care under voluntary placement?		
• How many additional children were in group homes or institutions?		

2) Does your state place a time limit on voluntary placement? ☐ yes (specify) _____ ☐ no

3) Does the state agency use contractual foster family care services under purchase of service agreements with private agencies? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes:

- How many children are not in foster family care under such arrangements? _____
- Which special kinds of children (if any) are cared for under such agreements (handicapped? infants? etc.) _____

_____

_____

- Who has responsibility for rehabilitative efforts with the child's parents? _____

_____

- If the private agency works with the parents, is that an obligation that is spelled out in the purchase of service agreement? ☐ yes ☐ no

- Are private agency casework services monitored by the state agency? ☐ yes ☐ no

- Are there financial incentives for the private agency to either return the child home or free him for adoption? ☐ yes ☐ no

- Are there any penalties if a private agency does not attempt to reunite the child and the biological parents? ☐ yes ☐ no

B. CASELOADS

Manageable caseloads handled by state agency staff are strong indicators that caseworkers and supervisors have the time and energy it takes to plan for children in foster care.

1) Does the state agency have caseworkers specializing exclusively in foster care cases? ☐ yes ☐ no

2) What percentage of the state's foster children are served by specialized caseworkers? _____

3) What is the average caseload size for workers who handle only foster care cases_____; for workers who handle foster care and other types of cases?_____

C. SUPPORT STAFF AND AGENCY POLICY

1) Is 'on-the-spot' legal advice available to state agency staff handling foster care cases? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, what is the person's name and position?

_____

2) Is there an expert on permanent planning in the state who helps state agency staff? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, what is this person's name and position?

_____

3) Does the state agency have a clearly stated policy supporting the principles of permanent planning? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, does the agency implement this policy by the commitment of resources to:

- include permanent planning material in the Social Services manual? ☐ yes ☐ no
- train first line supervisors in general supervisory skills, permanent planning concepts and skills, local office monitoring and accountability? ☐ yes ☐ no
- train caseworkers in permanent planning concepts and skills? ☐ yes ☐ no
- include permanent planning concepts in the foster parents training program? ☐ yes ☐ no
- provide supplementary materials on permanent planning methods? ☐ yes ☐ no
- require group decision making at critical points in moving the child toward a permanent home? ☐ yes ☐ no
- develop new programs to improve foster care services? ☐ yes ☐ no
- establish performance standards to rate workers on skills and results in moving foster children into permanent homes? ☐ yes ☐ no
- initiate or participate in public education programs focused on permanent planning and/or adoption? ☐ yes ☐ no

4) Is there an established mechanism for providing answers to field staff questions about agency policy and procedures that arise during regular casework activity, or as a result of the review process? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, • Describe briefly_____
_____
_____

- What are the time frames for providing responses: (specify) Minimum____
  Maximum____
  Average____

D. OPTIONS FOR EXITING FROM FOSTER CARE

Permanent planning options must be supported by statutes, policy, manuals, and general knowledge.

Please check all spaces that apply to each option.

	Not Available	Authorized by Statute	Endorsed by Agency Policy	Described in Agency Manuals	Widely Known by Caseworkers
Return Home					
Adoption by Foster Parents					
Adoption by Others					
Subsidized Adoption					
Guardianship					
Planned, Contractual Long-Term Foster Care					
Emancipation					
Group Homes					
Residential Centers					

E. COMMUNITY RESOURCES

1) In working with parents to make permanent plans for their children, community services are important.

Check the boxes in the grid below that describe services relevant to permanent planning efforts in your state or in your project target area:

	AVAILABLE	USED
Homemaker Services		
Parenting Skills Training		
Counseling: Marital, Individual, Family, Group		
Employment/Job Training/Vocational Rehabilitation		
Alcohol Treatment		
Drug Treatment		
Mental Health Clinics		
Medical Services		
Dental Services		
Self-Help Groups		
Ethnic Support Organizations		
Legal Aid		
Ex-Offender Program		

2) Are there any organized foster parent groups in the state? ☐ yes ☐ no

What is the relationship between them and the public agency? ☐ cooperative ☐ uninvolved ☐ antagonistic

3) Are there any child advocacy groups in the state? ☐ yes ☐ no

What is the relationship between them and the state agency? ☐ cooperative ☐ uninvolved ☐ antagonistic

F. THE LEGAL PROCESS

1) Who has the <u>right</u> to representation at:

- Dependency/neglect proceedings ☐ child ☐ parent ☐ neither
- Termination of parental rights proceedings ☐ child ☐ parent ☐ neither

2) When an attorney is appointed by the court, who pays the fee for:

- the child's attorney_____
- the parents' attorney_____

3) Are guardians ad litum used to represent the child's interest in:

- dependency/neglect proceedings ☐ regularly ☐ occasionally ☐ seldom/never
- termination of parental rights proceedings ☐ regularly ☐ occasionally ☐ seldom/never

4) Are publicly-employed attorneys (e.g., district attorneys, county counsel, deputy attorney generals) required to represent the agency in

- dependency/neglect proceedings? ☐ yes ☐ no
- termination of parental rights proceedings? ☐ yes ☐ no

5) Does your state have a statute for termination of parental rights (or termination of the parent-child relationship)? ☐ yes ☐ no

If Yes:

- Is the statute part of a juvenile code? ☐ yes ☐ no
- What grounds are clearly specified:

  Abandonment ☐ yes ☐ no

  Abuse/neglect ☐ yes ☐ no

  Mental illness ☐ yes ☐ no

  Mental deficiency ☐ yes ☐ no

  Alcoholism/drug abuse ☐ yes ☐ no

  Others (specify) _____

  _____

- Are attorneys available to caseworkers for initiating termination of parental rights proceedings? ☐ yes ☐ no

6) Is expert testimony about the child's or the parent's physical or mental condition ever used to:

- Establish dependency or neglect? ☐ yes ☐ no
- Establish grounds for termination of parental rights? ☐ yes ☐ no

If 'yes' to either of these, who pays for the expert's evaluation?_____

_____

7) Is there a continuing legal education program in your state (usually sponsored by law schools or the state bar association) that keeps lawyers and judges informed of developments in family law or juvenile law? ☐ yes ☐ no

G. ADOPTION

Adoption, through services delivered by both public and private adoption agencies, is the main permanent placement alternative for children in foster family care who cannot return home.

1) How many children in your state were placed in adoptive homes (including foster parent adoptions) from foster care last year?_____

2) Do the adoption agencies in your state use an adoption exchange? ☐ yes ☐ no

3) Is the state agency using an adoptive parent recruitment program to place special needs children? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, is the program effective in recruiting:

- families for sibling groups of 3 or more? ☐ yes ☐ no
- families for teenagers? ☐ yes ☐ no
- families for the physically handicapped? ☐ yes ☐ no
- families for the emotionally disturbed? ☐ yes ☐ no
- families for the mentally retarded? ☐ yes ☐ no
- black families ☐ yes ☐ no
- other minority families ☐ yes ☐ no

4) How many children are now in foster family care who have been free for adoption for at least 6 months?_____

5) At what age is a child in your state considered hard to place in an adoptive home, based on his age alone?

_____

6) What kind(s) of child(ren) is unlikely to find an adoptive home in your state:_____

_____

7) Does your state have a subsidized adoption program? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes:

- Is subsidy potentially available for:

  any special needs child in public agency custody? ☐ yes ☐ no

  (If no, explain_____

  _____)

  any special needs child in the custody of a private agency? ☐ yes ☐ no

- Is subsidy available to cover:

  care for pre-existing conditions ☐ full ☐ partial ☐ none

  monthly subsistence (not related to cost of care for any physical or mental condition)? ☐ yes ☐ no

- Is the adoptive parents' financial status a significant factor in determining eligibility? ☐ yes ☐ no

- How many adoptive placements in your state are presently receiving subsidy? _____

- Given sufficient subsidy funds, how many children now in foster care in your state could be placed in adoptive homes who would otherwise not be placed?_____

H. CASE REVIEW

One of the causes of foster care drift is the absence of case review once a child has entered foster family care.

1) Which of the following reviews does your agency implement:

- Mandatory judicial review ☐ yes _____ frequency ☐ no
- Discretionary judicial review ☐ yes _____ frequency ☐ no

  special qualifying circumstances?

  _____

- First line supervisory review ☐ yes _____ frequency ☐ no
- Second line supervisory review (sample) ☐ yes ☐ no

  If yes, how is the sample drawn?_____

  _____
- Other administrative review (sample) ☐ yes ☐ no

  If yes, how is the sample drawn?_____

  _____
- Citizens' review board (sample) ☐ yes ☐ no

  If yes, how is the sample drawn?_____

  _____

2) Are children in voluntary placement included in these reviews?

   ☐ all ☐ none ☐ some (specify)_____

3) Are children served by contract with private agencies included in these reviews?

   ☐ all ☐ none ☐ some (specify)_____

4) In which of these reviews does the caseworker take part:

   in person_____

   by special written report_____

5) Are there any sanctions for failure to comply with review procedures? ☐ yes ☐ no

6) What feedback does first line staff get from these reviews?

   _____

   _____

I. CLIENT TRACKING AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Part of the permanent planning process includes information gathering and use of this information by the state agency.

1) Have procedures been established for some form of systematic screening and reporting of the status and discharge plans for all children in foster care? ☐ yes ☐ no

2) Is information being collected and analyzed routinely by the state agency to monitor progress toward permanent planning objectives? ☐ yes ☐ no

3) Is the current information system automated? ☐ yes ☐ no

   manual? ☐ yes ☐ no

4) Does the current information system have built-in 'flags' to identify individual cases which meet the following conditions?

   - Children whose length of stay in foster care exceeds a pre-determined limit? ☐ yes ☐ no
   - Children who are freed for adoption and not yet placed? ☐ yes ☐ no
   - Children who are being moved through many different foster care placements? ☐ yes ☐ no
   - If yes to any of these, what kind of action does a flag generate? _____

     _____

5) Is the agency able to generate information on:

   - The number of children in foster care each month? ☐ yes ☐ no
   - The number of children entering and exiting foster care each month? ☐ yes ☐ no
   - The actual length of stay of children in foster care? ☐ yes ☐ no
   - The expected length of stay in foster care? ☐ yes ☐ no

- The proportion of children in foster care to the population of children under 18 in the state? ☐ yes ☐ no

- If yes to any of these, how does the agency use this information?_____

_____

6) Is the information system used exclusively by the state child welfare agency? ☐ yes ☐ no

If not, is it an extension of a larger state system? ☐ yes ☐ no

7) Does the agency compute the cost of keeping a child in:

- foster family care? ☐ yes ☐ no

  If yes, what is the cost

  Direct $_____, Indirect $_____, Total $_____

- group homes or institutional care? ☐ yes ☐ no

  If yes, what is the cost

  Direct $_____, Indirect $ _____, Total $_____

8) What kind of feedback do first line staff get from state information systems?_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C - ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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PLANNING

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APPENDIX D - PERMANENT PLANNING: A BRIEF PERSPECTIVE

HIS NAME IS TODAY

More than 350,000 children are in foster care in the United States today. The Children's Bureau of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare estimates that perhaps fifty to eighty percent of these children are adrift, with no plans made for them to return home or to become permanent members of another family. It is widely recognized that the inherent uncertainty about the foster child's status in a family limits the foster child's ability to form close, long-lasting attachments, and denies him the environment necessary for personal development.

Permanency Planning

Permanency planning requires both a conceptual base and implementation of specific techniques. They are not new to social work; both the practical techniques and the suppositions on which they are based are well understood by those in the child welfare field. What distinguishes permanency planning as a program is the movitation to take prompt, decisive action to place foster children in permanent homes, and the willingness to pursue termination of parental rights for those children who would best be served by adoption.

As a concept, permanency planning assumes that every child deserves a family of his own, which is committed to his care until the child is grown. To achieve permanent homes for foster children, permanency planning requires:

- structured, time-limited rehabilitation programs for parents, to help reunite families;
- early intervention, from the time the child first enters care;
- planned, regular visiting between parents and child;
- decisiveness about the best future placement for the child;
- knowledge about how to work with the courts to terminate parental rights;
- a range of permanency planning options which are based on agency policy and statutory authorization. These include subsidized adoption, formalized long-term foster care agreement, and guardianship.

Permanency Planning at Work: A Demonstration

When Margaret was eighteen months old, her young, single mother suffered a psychotic episode. To "spare the child from the degradations of the devil," she stabbed Margaret and held her under a hot shower. Margaret was burned severely and almost died. She was placed in a foster home, where she remained for the next four years. After a year of treatment, the mother began visiting her daughter. Margaret always showed fear at the sight of her mother, by crying and clinging to her foster mother. She began to have nightmares which caused her to wake up screaming one or more times a night.

A psychiatrist who evaluated both mother and daughter stated that Margaret had been so traumatized by her early experience that she would never be able to accept her mother. The mother's parental rights were terminated when Margaret was five, and she was adopted by her foster parents. The night she was told of her adoption, Margaret did not have a nightmare, and has never had one since.

Chris's parents were a Japanese woman and an American serviceman who had met in Japan. When Chris was two years old, his father sexually abused him. His father was sent to prison and Chris was placed in foster care. He stayed with the same foster family for seven years, visiting his mother about three times a year, at the mother's rather than the agency's request. After seven years, it was decided that Chris needed a permanent plan. When asked whether she would be interested in having Chris return, the mother indicated that she had always wanted him back, but, possibly because she was a foreigner with language difficulties, she had assumed that she could not question the decision of the state. Chris returned home, and his former foster parents have become a foster aunt and uncle to him. Although he had always been a well-behaved child, since he has gone home he has become more active and relaxed, and his school grades have improved.

Chris and Margaret were fortunate; they were two of the 509 children whom the Children's Services Division of the Oregon State Department of Human Resources selected for special attention in a four year demonstration project. Funded in 1973 by the Children's Bureau, Office of Child Development, the "Project to Free Children for Permanent Placement" developed aggressive planning techniques to find permanent homes for children like Margaret and Chris who were adrift in long term foster care. It actively pursued termination of parental rights in behalf of those children who would never be cared for by their parents, so the child could be placed in permanent adoptive homes.

The project screened foster children who met three criteria for inclusion:

- their caseworkers considered that the children were unlikely to ever return home;
- they had been in foster care for more than one year;
- they were considered adoptable if they could be legally freed for adoption.

The project operated in fifteen of Oregon's thirty-six counties. Twelve specially chosen and trained project caseworkers handled caseloads averaging twenty-five children. They worked actively with parents, foster parents, children, and the courts to achieve the best possible permanent plan for each child within about a year from the time the child entered the project.

Results

- Even though all project children were considered unlikely to return home, an active, goal-oriented, structured rehabilitation program with the parents resulted in twenty-six percent of the project children returning to their own families.

- Thirty-six percent were freed for adoption and placed in adoptive homes, either with their former foster parents or with new adoptive parents. Plans for adoption are in progress for an additional sixteen percent.

- Ten percent remained in foster care under a contracted long term foster care agreement or were placed with relatives.

- Thus, seventy-two percent of the project children were placed in a permanent home of some kind.

- A follow-up study in February, 1977, revealed that the placements made by the project have remained stable; ninety-two percent are still in their original placements.

Cost

The project proved to be cost effective. At the end of the third year, the expenses of starting-up the project were equalled by savings made in foster care maintenance payments.

Interest in reducing the number of children in unplanned foster care is growing. Many states have addressed the problem, and now the Children's Bureau, through the National Center for Child Advocacy, is giving momentum to the increasing interest of state agencies in moving children out of foster care. Capitalizing on the successful results of a demonstration project, which has been operating in Oregon since 1973, the National Center for Child Advocacy has launched a national effort to help states implement permanency planning techniques in their foster care programs. A number of states are being supported directly to replicate parts of the Oregon project or try new methods of their own. All states can use the strategies and philosophy of the Oregon demonstration as a vehicle for increasing the effectiveness of their programs.

Edited comments from His Name is Today, a brochure prepared by the project "Dissemination and Utilization of Permanent Planning Strategies for Children in Long Term Foster Care," HEW Contract No. 105-77-1000.

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO IMPLEMENT PERMANENCY PLANNING?

In principle, "permanent planning" is simply good casework. Effective caseworkers have always recognized the importance of family relationships. In practice, however, family permanency is difficult to achieve when the need arises for substitute care. All too often foster care practice is directed toward maintenance of the placement and not toward developing a permanent situation.

What is required to change existing practices and to implement planning for permanency? The experience of Oregon and of other states demonstrates that a comprehensive approach produces results.

At one level are all the direct services - the effort. It is what people do that makes it happen. Social workers, with manageable caseloads, who are decisive about the best future placement for the child, can be effective by intervening from the time a child first enters foster care; by planning regular visits between parents and child, by structuring time-limited rehabilitation efforts for parents, and by organizing legal evidence for court action to terminate parental rights. Knowledgeable attorneys, committed foster parents, expert witnesses to evaluate parental condition. homemaker and other community services, are all needed participants.

Yet effort spins if its direction is not supported administratively. Top-level agency endorsement of permanency policies, and expert supervision and consultation, can reinforce direction and purpose.

So much for staff resources, which cost money and appear on budgets, because they take staff time. Another key element is the institutional framework, including a sound statute that authorizes alternatives to foster care, such as subsidized adoption; caseload screening and review procedures; and client information systems.

Lastly, permanency planning requires a body of knowledge, the content and method, to guide practice. The project funded by the National Center for Child Advocacy, Children's Bureau, has written Permanent Planning for Children in Foster Care: A Handbook for Social Workers, which identifies criteria for decisions that must be made. Also, some states are writing practice manuals for attorneys, on dependency adjudication. Of course, in addition, the profession must continue to develop the knowledge and procedural safeguards that are needed for this difficult area of practice.

Arthur Emlen. Case Record Vol 1(3), page 1, August, 1977. HEW contract 105-77-1000.